

Remarks/Arguments

Overview

Claims 1-12 remain in the application. Claims 13-17, previously withdrawn as nonelected following a restriction requirement, have been cancelled by this amendment. New claims 18-24 have been presented.

Applicants acknowledge with thanks the Examiner's determination of allowability of claims 2-7 and 9-12 if rewritten to include all the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. Applicants respectfully request that the requirement to rewrite these claims in independent form be deferred until the allowability of claims 1 and 8 has been determined.

All claims remaining in the application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and reexamination of the application is respectfully requested in view of the referenced amendment and the following remarks.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over either Wilson, U.S. Patent No. 2,439,535, in view of Wiswall, U.S. Patent No. 2,471,506, or over Meeker, U.S. Patent No. 2,879,026 in view of Wiswall. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 8 are allowable over the cited references as each of the combinations fails to teach or suggest all of the limitations of the claims.

Wiswall is relied upon in both of the alleged combinations for teaching a drain pump. However, Wiswall fails to teach or suggest a drain pump. The pump 40 of Wiswall is used to pump wash fluid to the spray nozzles 36 (see col.4, lines 20-27). Applicants believe all of the draining operations described in Wiswall to be accomplished by opening various valves and utilizing gravity flow of the fluids to the sewer pipe 22. A first draining operation wherein tanks 48, 49 and 50 are drained through valves 482, 492 and 502 respectively to common pipe 54 connected to sewer pipe 22 is described at col.

3, lines 19-23. In a second described draining operation, the washing chamber 24 is drained through drain outlet 46 through valves 151, 171 and 201 through conduit 45 to sewer line 22 (see col. 2, line 54 through col. 3, line 2 and col. 3, lines 65-70). A third draining operation is described at col. 4, line 74 through col. 5, line 3, wherein valve 181 is opened when the system is shut down at the completion of the operation to drain the pump 40 and the pipes within the washing chamber. Finally, a fourth draining operation is described at col. 5, lines 4-11 wherein valve 211 facilitates the draining of conduits 43 and 44 with each of the conduits inclined to the right to completely drain the liquid to the sewer system.

Applicant believes all of the drain operation teachings of Wiswall to describe gravity flow of fluid, such that Wiswall does not teach a drain pump as alleged in the Office Action. As Wiswall fails to teach or suggest a drain pump fluidly connected to the drain for selectively performing a drain operation as recited in claims 1 and 8, both of the alleged combinations with Wilson or Meeker fail to establish a case of *prima facie* obviousness. For at least this reason, claims 1 and 8 should be deemed allowable over the cited art.

With respect to claim 1 and Wilson, Applicants respectfully submit that there is no teaching or suggestion of a sealing member arranged at the exit port of the filter chamber for selectively sealing the filter chamber from the drain during portions of the drain operation as recited in claim 1. First, drain valve 33 is relied upon for teaching the flapper valve of claim 1. It follows that drain valve 33 cannot at once be the flapper valve and the sealing member. Further, drain valve 33 in Wilson is operated to open a gravity drain of the wash chamber. Therefore, this valve cannot provide selective sealing of the filter chamber from the drain during the drain operation, as a drain operation in Wilson is terminated whenever drain valve 33 is closed. For at least this reason, claim 1 should be deemed allowable over the combination of Wilson and Wiswall.

As for claim 8, Wilson fails to teach or suggest means for sealing the inlet portion of the collection chamber during select portions of the drain operation. For at least this reason, claim 8 should be deemed allowable over the combination of Wilson and Wiswall.

With respect to claim 1 and Meeker, Applicants respectfully submit that there is no teaching or suggestion of a sealing member arranged at the exit port of the filter chamber for selectively sealing the filter chamber from the drain during portions of the drain operation as recited in claim 1. Further, valve 85 in Meeker is operated to initiate a gravity drain of the wash chamber. Therefore, this valve cannot provide selective sealing of the filter chamber from the drain during the drain operation, as a drain operation in Wilson is terminated whenever drain valve 85 is closed. For at least this reason, claim 1 should be deemed allowable over the combination of Meeker and Wiswall.

With respect to claim 8, Meeker fails to teach or suggest means for sealing the inlet portion of the collection chamber during select portions of the drain operation. For at least this reason, claim 8 should be deemed allowable over the combination of Meeker and Wiswall.

New Claims

Applicant believes that new claims 18-24 are fully supported by the application as originally filed. No new matter is believed or intended to be involved. Support for the new claims can be found at least on pages 14-15 and Figure 7. It is respectfully submitted that all of the new claims are allowable over the cited references as none of the cited references alone or in combination, teach or suggest all of the limitations of the claims. In addition to the arguments presented with respect to claim 1 above, independent claim 18 is further distinguished by a filter chamber connected to the conduit and adapted to receive washing fluid from the conduit and entrap soil particles from the washing fluid in the filter chamber while permitting cleansed washing fluid to be directed back into the washing chamber, said filter chamber including an exit port. As each of the new claims 19-24 depend from and further distinguish an allowable base claim, they should also be deemed allowable.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed or rendered moot. It is believed that a complete response has been made to all of the outstanding rejections, and Applicant therefore respectfully requests that this amendment be entered.

No fees or extensions of time are believed to be due in connection with this filing. However, please consider this a request for any extension inadvertently omitted, and charge any additional fees to Deposit Account No. 23-1660.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims are allowable over the prior art of record. Early notification of allowability is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: September 5, 2007

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